4: Liu K-4 (no date) 1944 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

791 one sheep is sacrificed for prayer to avoid insect pests and for thanksgiving for their coming crops. The third occasion is called the "West Wind" ceremony.
796 It is held around October, and one sheep is sacrificed for the purpose of praying that no west wind may destroy their crops, or a thanksgiving that no west wind has destroyed their crops. The fourth ceremony is called "Closing Mountain" Ceremony. It is held sometime in November, in which in some localties six sheep or one cow is sacrificed as a final thanksgiving to the gods for their harvest, and from that time on the mountains are closed by snow, and no one can go in until after the "Opening Mountain" ceremony the next spring.

These are only a few examples to illustrate how climatic and geographic factors are limiting the economic resources, the characteristics, the mode of living, and the mode of thinking of the people.

I wish to mention how the tribes people, as affected by their climatic and geographical environments, have created two great problems for the government of Li-fan County:

631 I. The hugeness of the area, the difficulties in transportation, and the
624 variations in topography and in climate have divided the county into a number of isolated islands of communities who have independently been moulded by their individual environments into different social groups, and the county government is not able to get its influence to radiate far into the inaccessible places. Thus, even today, the part of the county that is under the direct control of the county government is really the region between Wei-chow and the Hung-chiao Mountain. The rest of the area is still under the rule of T'u-ssus. There are four T'u-ssus in Li-fan, governing nearly two thirds of the area of Li-fan. The tribes people under the rule of a T'u-ssu do not pay taxes to the government, and they do not obey the laws of the government. Therefore they are a constant source of trouble.

Owing to the high death rate and the decrease of population in the area, two of the T'u-ssus have died without heirs, not even a daughter to get a husband to take care of affairs. Another T'u-ssu has died but has a daughter, so the brother of the Wa-ssu T'u-ssu 瓦寺土司 of Wen-chwan is married in to be the T'u-ssu. There is really no one strong enough to head things up and affairs are in a rather chaotic situation. One local leader, Su 蘇, is trying to be the T'u-ssu of all. He has married two woman rulers, and is trying to get into power by marriage. That is a serious issue which the Li-fan government is facing because it is closely connected with the poppy cultivation problem.

249 II. The second problem is that of poppy cultivation. Perhaps most of you have heard of the armed conflict around Mao Hsien 茂縣 and Mao Kung 懋功 last summer. It is a question that cannot be settled by military force. Opium is the one thing that brings cash to the mountain people because the crops are not subject to destruction by bears and wild pigs. It is not bulky, and is therefore easy to carry through the dangerous mountain paths. What the people put in is relatively small, but what they gain is tremendous. In the valleys

Mewu

region. Originally the Chinese government played the role of the 648
highest liege lord, since the t'u-szu had to pay taxes to it and lend
assistance in war. The Chinese government installed the t'u-szu
in office, that is to say, it gave the t'u-szu family its domain to a
certain extent as an hereditary feudal possession. The Huang-szu-
ling was installed only 7 or 8 years ago (that is, about 1928) by the
Chinese government. His family, known for its war-like (or rather
marauding) enterprises, comes from the province of Hsik'ang, south
of Kansu. It is characteristic for the intellectual and social attitude
of a feudal society that the highest incarnation of the great Labrang
Lamasery is a brother of the Huang-szu-ling. The independence of the
Huang-szu-ling was very much curtailed by the Chinese government,
especially in the organization of the district of Hsia-ho. The Mewu-
Fantzu henceforth do not have to pay their taxes to the Huang-szu-
ling, but the t'ou-mu and his sub-chiefs transfer the taxes they col-
lect directly to the Chinese district officials.

One of the lamaseries - Mewu-hsin-szu or new Mewu lamasery - 792,
in the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu is directly under the adminis- 624
tration of the t'ou-mu. The territory of Mewu-chiu-szu - old Mewu
lamasery - is under the administration of three sub-chiefs. The
territory of Lao-da-ma is under two sub-chiefs, one of whom has a
higher rank than all the rest. Sedentary Fantzu as well as tent nomads
are also under the administration of the sub-chiefs.

The t'ou-mu lives alternately in a regular house situated between 643
He-tso and Mewu-hsin-szu, or in a tent. The latter is not different 624
from the tents of other Fantzu. The t'ou-mu has a representative in
each of the three lamaseries in his area, and he sometimes lives with
them. The office of the t'ou-mu is hereditary from father to eldest
son. If the son is not suited to the position, the /76/ father has the
right to name a son that is more qualified as his successor. If the
t'ou-mu has no sons, his adopted son-in-law becomes his successor.
A definite number of families are under the administration of a
chief and his five sub-chiefs. Each of these families has a right to
five definite pasture areas. There are no marriage restrictions with-
in the group of families governed by a t'ou-mu. The t'ou-mu must
see to it that people from a strange tribe under no circumstances
pasture their animals in the region under his jurisdiction. He has [663]
more than ten officials (Chinese: kuan-shih) who are laymen, and in
addition the above-mentioned representatives in the lamaseries.
They, too, are known as kuan-shih, but are lamas. Their task,
among other things, is to welcome lamasery guests. There are no
particular office-holders apart from the t'ou-mu, his five sub-chiefs

Mewu

643 and the kuan-shih. Since the t'ou-mu does not speak Chinese, he
624 has a Chinese secretary to deal with the district officials, with whom
● he communicates through an interpreter. The t'ou-mu appoints the kuan-shih and discharges them if they are not qualified. The kuan-shih are not paid. Everyone is obliged to accept the post of kuan-shih if appointed by the t'ou-mu. Length of office is not determined; it runs between one to three years. The kuan-shih must help the t'ou-mu carry out his duties. For example, they are sent by him to some tent community to conduct inquiries in legal matters, such as to investigate a plunder. The tent communities do not have a special local council.

643 The chief duties of the t'ou-mu are the following: He regulates
701 the distribution of pastureland, and determines when the nomads
648 are to move from one pasture to another. The oatfields in the region of the winter pasturelands are the property of the t'ou-mu and are distributed by him. Rent, usually in the form of butter, must be paid him for the oatfields. He is the war lord of the tribe, and as such he can recruit eligible men for military service, /77/ likewise mounts and pack animals (horses and yaks). In case of war he must
643 put his soldiers at the disposal of the t'u-szu of Labrang. He and
651 his sub-chiefs must collect the taxes levied by the Chinese govern-
648 ment on the Fantzu, and hand them over to the district official of Hsia-ho. I could not ascertain whether the t'ou-mu withholds a certain sum for himself from the taxes he collects. The t'ou-mu must also put mounts and pack animals at the disposal of the Chinese district official when the latter or one of his subordinates travels
643 through the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu. The t'ou-mu has the
681 same prerogatives as an incarnation, in that he can demand a ninefold indemnity if he has been robbed. The t'ou-mu also has the privilege of donating the largest branch of a bush and a particularly long dart for the obo at the obo festival.

From what we have said about the position and authority of the t'ou-mu, it follows that he and his officials do not have a particularly great influence on the members of a tribe. We have also mentioned the fact that the individual tent communities do not
618 have regular chieftains. As far as I could ascertain, the clan does not have a great influence in the social and judicial life. There are no clan chieftains like the Chinese tsu-ch'ang.

375 On the other hand, certain societies have formed which are given the general name of ts'aowa (1) and whose chief function

1. Ekvall 4), page 69, briefly mentions these societies